



Statement on the near death of an 8-year-old boy

Issue Date: June 19, 2019

On February 19, 2019, the Arizona Department of Child Safety received a report regarding the near fatality of an 8-year-old boy.

The child arrived at the hospital in critical condition after being run over by a vehicle driven by his grandmother, Kimberly Southern.

The joint DCS and Phoenix Police Department investigation determined Ms. Southern threatened to leave the child behind if he did not get into the van. When Ms. Southern began driving out of the parking lot, the child grabbed onto the van's door handle. After driving approximately 20 feet with child hanging on the door, the child's hand slipped off the handle and Ms. Southern ran over child.

The child suffered extensive head injuries.

Ms. Southern and the child were living together at the time of the incident.

DCS removed one of the near fatality victim's siblings and placed them with relatives. The near fatality victim's other sibling was assessed as safe with their biological father who did not live with the children at the time of the incident.

After the near fatality victim was released from the hospital, DCS took custody and placed him in a medical group home.

DCS continues to provide services to the child and his family.

The Phoenix police investigation is on-going.

DCS has received the following prior reports involving the near fatality victim and his family:

On February 26, 2014, the Department received a report alleging the mother physically abused and neglected the near fatality victim and his siblings. The report alleged the mother excessively slapped the children and the home was constantly filthy. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The family was participating in community resources prior to the report. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On April 26, 2014, the Department received a report alleging the mother physically abused the near fatality victim's sibling. The report alleged the mother excessively spanked the

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child with a belt. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegation. The family was participating in community resources prior to the report. The Department provided the family with child care. The allegation was unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On August 28, 2014, the Department received a report alleging the mother neglected the near fatality victim and his siblings. The report alleged the mother was not providing the children with adequate food and they were always dirty. The investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. DCS provided the family with in-home services. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On December 17, 2014, the Department received a report alleging the mother physically abused and neglected the near fatality victim's siblings. The report alleged the mother excessively spanked the children and the home was filthy and the children were often dirty. There was not enough evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On January 27, 2015, the Department received a report alleging the mother physically abused one of the near fatality victim's siblings. The report alleged the mother excessively slapped the child. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegation. The allegation was unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On June 18, 2015, the Department received a report alleging the mother neglected the near fatality victim and his siblings. The report alleged the home was filthy and the children were always wearing dirty clothes. The report also alleged one of the children often had diaper rashes because the child was forced to wear wet diapers. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On June 24, 2017, a report was received alleging neglect to the near fatality victim by Ms. Southern and his mother. The report stated that the home was extremely filthy and adults in the home were abusing drugs. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On June 26, 2017, the Department received a report alleging neglect to the near fatality victim by his mother. The report alleged the home was filthy and adults in the home were using illicit drugs. There was not enough evidence to support the allegations. The report was unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On July 20, 2017, the Department received a report alleging the mother physically abused and neglected a sibling of the near fatality victim. While DCS was investigating this allegation, the Department received another report on the family. On August 7, 2017, the Department received a report alleging the mother physically abused and neglected the near fatality victim's siblings. The report alleged the home was filthy and adults in the home were using illicit drugs in front of the children. The report also alleged the mother hits the children. The DCS investigation did not find evidence of physical abuse or neglect. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On September 6, 2017, the Department received a report alleging an unknown family member physically abused the near fatality victim. The report alleged the child was hit by an unknown family member. DCS could not find evidence to support the allegation so it was unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

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On November 8, 2017, the Department received a report alleging neglect to the near fatality victim by Ms. Southern and his mother. The report alleged illicit drugs were being used in the home. The report also stated the home was extremely dirty. The DCS investigation did not find evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.

On January, 22, 2019, the Department received a report alleging the near fatality victim was neglected by Ms. Southern and his mother. The report alleged Ms. Southern and the mother were allowing the children to roam around outside unsupervised. The report also alleged that the child was not receiving a prescribed medication which exacerbated the illness he had at the time. The DCS investigation could not find evidence to support the allegations. The allegations were unsubstantiated and the case was closed.